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SUCCESS STORY

Water Pipes Ease Conflict Between Villages

New pipes connect four villages in Kunar province to clean water and each other.



Photo: USAID/LGCD

Children pump clean water at a communal tap connected to the USAID-funded pipe network in Nawa village.



Photo: USAID/LGCD

A villager poses by a culvert built as part of a roads project in Nawa.

USAID is supporting stabilization and empowering Afghans to manage their own development.

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When water is scarce, rural Afghan communities often have to compete with their neighbors for the vital resource, leading to tension between communities. Four villages in Kunar province with a long history of conflict were recently brought together by a USAID-funded pipe network to bring running water to communal pumps throughout the village. The project has increased access to clean water and removed many of the causes of discord between these communities.

Nawa village is made up of four sub-villages, and is located approximately three kilometers from Pakistan near the Nawa Pass, a major border-crossing point. The villages rely on terraced subsistence farming, fed by small mountain springs that occasionally run dry. Prior to USAID's assistance, only one of the four villages had a rudimentary water system, and most of the villages' women walked long distances through mountainous terrain to reach the closest water source.

Through its Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) program, USAID provided funding to help the village construct a three-kilometer pipe network to deliver water to all four villages. Villagers now have access to clean water near their homes, improving health and sanitation.

After seeing how collaboration on the water project benefitted Nawa village as a whole, the four villages began to work together on other development projects, including a road project. This will help to link the communities to the economic opportunities offered by their proximity to the Nawa Pass, which is poised to become a major official border crossing following completion of a paved road within the next year.

Through implementation of a range of development activities designed to strengthen sub-national Afghan government structures in Kunar, USAID is supporting stabilization and empowering Afghans to manage their own development. Future LGCD projects will continue to engage communities in the selection and implementation of small-scale development activities, and will be designed to foster stronger ties between these communities and their local government bodies.